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The Adultresses Funerall Day:

In flaming, scorching, and consuming fire :

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187/3
The burning downe to ashes of *Alice Clarke* late of *V x-*
bridge in the County of *Miadlesex*, in *West-smith-*
field, on *Wensday* the 20. of *May*, 1635. for the
unnaturall poisoning of *Forinne Clarke*
her Husband.

A breviary of whose Confession taken from her owne
mouth, is here unto annexed : As also what she sayd at the
place of her Execution.

By her daily Visiter *H. G.* in life and death. And now published
by Authority and Command.



L O N D O N

Printed by *N. and I. Okes*, dwelling in *Well-yard* in lit-
tle *St. Bartholmews*, neare unto the *Lame*
Hospisall gate, 1635.

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THE ADULTERIN

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MURDER VPON

MURDER:

OR,

THE OLD WAY OF POYSONING NEWLY REVIVED.

In the remarkable Act of *Alice Clarke*, performed upon her Husband *Fortune Clarke*, by her, poysoned on *Ascension day* last past : For which being arraigned, convicted, and condemned, shee suffer'd by Fire in *West-Smithfield*, upon Wednesday in *Whitsouweeke*, being the 20. day of May, 1635. with the last words shee delivered at the time and place of her Execution.

Great and stupendious are the workes and wonders of the God Almighty, who onely searcheth the hearts and reines, and therefore perspicuously knoweth the very thoughts and strength of man : For bee his vaine apprehensions never so cunning to contrive, his policy to conceale, or his boldnesse to out-face any nefarious act committed, yet his unfounded and incomprehensible Wisdome, which can be no way circumscribed, is able at all times, and upon all occasions, as well to publish, as punish it in the open eye of the world, of which, as well those times past, as these present, have, and doe afford us remarkable Examples : I will begin with the Sinne, before I proceed to the Fact.

A Murderer, the *Latines* call *Homicida*, from *homo* and *cado*, id est, *Hominem occidere*, To kill a man : Now who the father of murder is, you may read in the *Go-spell* of *St. Iohn* Chap. 8. Vers. 44. where our blessed Saviour speaking to the Pharisees, saith, *Tee are of your father the Devill, and the lusts of your father yee will doe :* He hath beene a murderer from the beginning, &c. For the punishment thereof, read *Gen.* 9. vers. 5. *For surely I will require your blood wherein your lives are, at the hand of every beast will I require it ; and at the hand of man, even at the hand of a mans brother, will I require the the life of man : Who so sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed : for in the image of God hath hee made man, &c.* And *Numb.* 35. 31. *Moreover, you shall take no recompence for the life of the murderer, which is worthy to dye, for he shall be put to death.* That, for the punishment. Now for the execrablenesse of the Sin: We find in *Gen.* 4. 11. God speaking to *Caine*, after the slaughter of his Brother *Abel*, after this manner, *Now therefore thou art cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brothers blood from thine hand :* As also *Deutronomy* 27. 24. *Cursed be hee that smiteth his neighbour secretly : And all the people shall say, so be it,*

If this monstrous sinne be so heinous in the sight of God, betwixt neighbour and neighbour, or if committed by one stranger upon another, how much more horrid appeareth it in his eyes ; when the husband and Wife, who in the matrimoniall Contract, are no more too, but one flesh, shall barbarously and treacherously insidiate one anothers life. According to that verse of the Poet :

Vivitur ex rapto, non hospes ab hospite tutus,
Non socer a genere, fratrum quoque gratia rara est :

Imminet

(* *)

*Imminet exitio vir coningis, illa mariti:
Larida terribiles miscet aconita nevere,
Filius ante diem patrios inquit in annos, &c.*
which I have late read thus paraphras'd,
*All live on spoile, the guest is not secure
In his Hosts house, nor is the Father sure
Protected by the Sonne: even brothers iarre,
True love and friendship is amongst them rare.
The husband doth insidiate the wife,
And she againe seeks to subplant his life:
The rough-brow'd Step-dame her yong step-son hugs,
Tempering for him (meane time) mortiferous drugs:
The Sonne after the Fathers yeares enquires,
And long before the day, his death desires, &c.*

Such were the passages of those times there amongst the Heathens, when Chřtiantity was not knowne, but that they should be so familiar and conversant with us, is the more to be pittied and lamented.

In the flourishing State of Rome, there were many temperers of poyson, and these were call'd *Venificæ*, which word wee apply too, and conferre upon, Effaciation, Sorcery, and Witchcraft: Concerning which the Civill Lawes of the Empire thus speake, *In institut. Iur. in fine in lege Cornelia*, in the Cornelian Law, *Et venificæ capite damnantur, qui artibus odiosis tam veneno, quam susurris magicis homines occiderint, vel mala medicamenta publice vendiderint*, that is, Let those be held guilty of capitall offence, who by odious and abhorrid Arts, as well by poyson, as by magicke spells and wisperings, shall kill any man: In which State are likewise included all such, who shall publickly sell any evill Confections: From which Canon we may ground three severall sorts of delinquents in this kind, which passe under the name of *Venificium*:

veneficiam : the first Poysoners, the second Sorcerers, or Witches, the third these Apothecaries or *Empricks*, who shall vend any mortifarious drugs, knowing that by them any man or womans life, may bee infidiated, and in this case now in hand, though the seller (as he hath apparently justified himselfe may be excused, yet the byer as the Law hath openly convicted her, so we may presume that she is legally condemned.

Now what the reason may be conjectured in these our latest, but worst dayes : that so many nefarious acts, equalling, if not farre surpassing these perpetrated in former ages, should be new committed : as Catamastisme, Sodometry, Paracidy, many headed murders and the like : I can give no other reason then this, the contempt of the feare of God, and the neglect of his Sabbath.

But to leave off all forraigne prodigious acts of the like horrid nature. Which as they are numerous, so they are manifest, in History and Chronologie, and go no further then our owne nation, and these latter dayes. Hath not one brother in the heat of Wine slaine another in the Taverne ? A sonne transperced the very wombe in which he was conceived, and suffered for the fault upon the Gibbet ? A man in his drunkenness casts his knife upon his Wife, and missing her, pouned into the brest of his innocent childe, and kild him dead in the instant : hath not the woman offered the like outrage, upon her husband in her fury, and left him dead in the place, and suffered lately for it, for remarkable example.

Within the compasse of foureteene moneths or thereabouts, one *Enoch ap Evans*, upon a small difference betwixt his brother and him, tooke the advantage when

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when he was asleepe cut his throat first, and after his
head quite off with his knife, and when the mother hea-
ring a busling above, came into the roome to heare the
cause of such a noise, he prosecuted her downe the
stayers, and afterwards cut off her head with an *Hatchet*,
for which he was Apprehended, arraigned, convicted
condemned at *Shrewsbury*, and after, some distance from
the place executed.

Since then, these grand Malefactors, who went com-
monly by the name of *Country Tom* and *Canbery Beffe*,
their fearefull murders upon three severall Gentlemen,
at three sundry times, (the discourse of whose Actions,
Examinations, Confession, and Sufferings, because
they are already published to the view of the World,
I will no longer insist upon, or make any Repetition
of their hainous crimes to trouble the Reader. But to
come nearer to the matter of this fact now in Agitation,
I will onely remember you of Mistresse *Arden*, who
caused her Husband to bee murdered in her owne
House at *Faversham* in *Kent*, the memorable Cer-
cumstances thereof deserving places in a most ap-
proved Chronicle, may be very well spared in this
short discourse. As also of Mistresse *Page* of *Plimouth*,
who for poysoning her Husband, suffered with her
sweet-heart Master *George Strangwich*, who had beene
before time betrothed unto her: her husband being old,
she yong, by which may be apprehended the misery of
inforced marriage. But not to tire your patience I will
onely trouble you with the poore wretched creature,
who last suffered in *Smithfield* in this kinde, much com-
miserated, much lamented: give mee leave a little to
to insist upon her cause, and compare it with this now in
present.

(***)

Her injuries, and harsh and unmanly usage spurred on by the instigations of the divell, almost compeld her to what she did; which, as they would be scarce modest for me to speake, so they were almost beyond the strength of Nature for her to suffer: shee being young and tender; he old and peevish; who notwithstanding his clownish behaviour, and churlish comportment towards her, as seldome or never affording her a smooth brow, or friendly countenance, used not onely to beat her with the next cudgell that came accidentally unto his hand, but often tying her to his bed-post to strip her and whippe her, &c.

But enough, if not too much of that; she then weary of so wretched a life, which she would have bin glad to be rid off, and loath in her modesty to acquaint any friend or neighbour with her desperate purpose, who perhaps, (nay no doubt) by their good counsell might haue diuerted her from so wicked a resolution, and the divell with all catching hold upon so fit an opportunity to worke upon her weaknesse, she pondered with her selfe how she might end both their lives by poyson, which having provided and prepared to that end, shee first gave him part, and after resolved with her selfe to drinke the rest: But better motions now comming into her thoughts, and shee truely repentant of what she had done, finding the confession begunne to work with him, fell downe before him upon her knees: First acknowledging the fact, then humbly desiring from him forgiveness, with all, beseeching him to take some present *Antidote* to preserve his life, which was yet recoverable: on whom he sterly looking, as he lay in that Agony gasping betwixt life and death, returned her answer in this manner; nay thou Strumpet
and

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and murderesse. I will receive no helpe at all, but I am
resolved to dye, and leave the world, be it for no other
cause, but to have thee burnt at a stake for my death :
which having said, and obstinate in that *Hebberish* reso-
lution, he soone after expired. And this Relation I
received from those of credite, who were well ac-
quainted with the conditions of them both.

I know not how to parallell these two : Her of
whom I made this Short discourse, or this miserable
woman, who suffered by fire in *Smithfel* upon wed-
nesday in the *Whitson* weeke last, being the twentieth
of *May*, *Anno* 1635. the passages of whose life, con-
viction, and death thus followes.



The free and voluntary Confession of *Alice*
Clarke, the 12. day of *May*, 1635. concerning the
Death of *Fortune Clarke* her husband, at the
time she was in Prison.

A Just cause, all persons may conjecture, was given
on her part, of great dissensions, likely to arise be-
twene her Husband and her selfe, unto selfe-will free
to be so addicted, disobediently to frequent the com-
pany of one *White*, of whom oftentimes her Husband
hand had interdicted her his society and familiarity :
which acquaintance of theirs was begun, before *Clarke*
her Husband, entred into Marriage with her, and there-
fore with no small difficulty could be forgotten, or sha-
ken off, such former ancient entertainments. No ad-

monitions or threats to either parties could prevaile, that proceeded from *Clarke* unto his wife, or unto *White*, of continuall private meetings betweene them: Which *Clarke* perceiving, outrageously fell from words unto blowes with his wife, the smart whereof she feeling, incontinently begot in her heart dislike, and resolution of revenge on her Husband *Clarke* for the same, a fit humour for the devill to worke on, and to her old friend *White*, to give occasion, not of dislike, but content to put in practice what she intended, which he might easily perceive by many pensive declamations, in private utter'd betweene themselves of her Husbands unkinde usage: The confirmation whereof appears by the words that proceeded out of her owne mouth.

First, she confessed, because she often companied with *White*, that stirred up her Husbands iust anger against *White* and her selfe.

Secondly, that unawares unto them both, her Husband finding her and *White* shut up together privately in a Chamber in the house, on *Ascension-day* last in the afternoone, was thereat so with fury enraged, that hee did beate *White* going out of the doores, and after that, freshly fell foule upon her, and so cruelly added blowe upon blow upon her body, that the markes thereof were very visible on her body at this present. Her old Love, *White*, instantly taketh this unto heart, and in a rage (as she said) uttered these words, *That it were better for one to be hanged, then to endure so discontented a life*, and presently putting his hand into his pocket, he tooke out 4 Tokens, and gave them unto *Alice Clarke*, saying unto her, if he had had more money, hee would have given it unto her: which 4 Tokens so given unto her,

her, she went unto *Walsbridge* forthwith, and that afternoon bought a penny worth of *Antidote* at an Apothecary in *Walsbridge*, intending the same unto her Husband, with a further reservation, that if her Husband had not taken it, she would have administered the same unto her selfe, and so put an end unto all her sorrows, as she vainely supposed.

Thirdly, she said, that she was not the cause of her Husbands death, because shee gave not unto him the poyson whereof he died, but he tooke it himselfe violently out of her pockets, which her Husband had rifled, upon hope to finde some chinke or money there: but of such hopes he altogether was disappointed and deluded. Whether this be not a lame excuse, or strange delusion, I referre it unto the censure of the Judicious; and no further discovery of the fact, could I get from her at that time.

Shee further said, that on *Ascension-day* her husband violently attempted to drowne himselfe, which shee prevented by her language upon him: but in short space afterwards dyed that Night of the *Mercury*, taken by himselfe out of her pocket, as afore-said.

Fourthly, shee seemed to be very much afflicted in conscience, that shee was a yeare since gotten with Child by her Master, with whom shee last dwelt withall; who perceiving the same, with a small summe of money, matched her unto *Fortune Clarke* her Husband, about *Alballontide* last, whom she could not love, or have any matter of maintenance, but relied upon her Masters former promises for the same: and hee sayling of giving her meanes, fell into folly and wickednesse. A great clog unto such a mans conscience, if it be true, to seduce a woman unto his will, and so leave her.

A SHORT TRACT UPON THE LAINOUSNESSE of Poysoning.

THough there be sundry sorts of *Murther* with their severall degrees, as open, or secret, acted upon a friend, a stranger, or ones selfe, yet in my opinion, I know not any of them which contains so much villany, neither including so many deepe circumstances in them, as that of poysoning: That I thinke is the reason that there are so few examples of it in Holy writ, this way either being then not knowne, followed, or practised; therefore to describe the quality of it and to aggravate it, I must wish you to consider these foure things.

First, the *Duplicem modum*, secondly, the *Duplicem effectum*: *Modus prior*, the first Manner, *Deliberando*, *Meditando*, Is an Act done by Deliberation, or Meditation, no waies carried, and hurried by the violence either of will or of passion, but done upon a cold blood, and not seldome upon fixed resolutions.

Modus posterior, *Celandi, obrependo*, by a secret intent to hide it and conceale it from God if it were possible, so it is to the Patient under the shadow of some Physicke, or other medicine, coloured with an outward shew of an honest intent, and as far as they can from the Publick Magistrate; or else to make a distance of time, either to excuse themselves, or flye away from the hands of Justice: though,

Lex autem inchoat factum esse in prima parte: Secundo
 Secondly, *Effectus prior* *scilicet stupescendo* by
 changing, stupifying, or absolutely taking away the sen-
 ses, and depraving the operative organs of the sould,
 and sometimes infecting all the principles of life as the
 head, the heart, and the liver, howsoever altering
 and overthrowing the frame and constitution of mans
 body in generally, and making him unfit for a prepara-
 ration of himselfe for death, though it be upon him, so
 that without the speciall Mercy of God, the party thus
 abused, dyes without either knowledge of his sinnes, or
 repentance for them.

Secondly, *Effectus posterior* *creaturarum abusus*, the
 abusing of the Creatures, contrary to the end of their
 Creation: They being brought forth for the use
 and health of Mans Body, by this meanes they
 are made deadly, nay this manner of killing
 any, makes not onely the prime Agent guilty,
 but infects, and makes guilty others too, or at least,
 causes them to be examined strictly by the Magistrate:
 so that howsoever their good name for the present, is
 blotted and blemished, and what more is, they have
 but two waies to comfort themselves, the first, is the
 witnesse of their owne Consciences Integrity, the se-
 cond, is the Judges knowledge of their Innocence and
 Ignorance, by a prudent examination, of the fact per-
 petrated by all circumstances, and suspicious Argu-
 ments: And in this kinde the Apothecary for selling,
 the Messengers for buying, the Composers of it, and
 the deliverers of it to the party, stand in an hazard ei-
 ther of their lives, or fortunes, or both.

Laying aside all these together, I hope it will easily
 appeare what a haynous sinne it is, when it is thus com-
 mitted

mitted: first, with Deliberation: Secondly, with Secrecie: Thirdly, with disabling the party to fit himselfe for mercy, and with the abusing the blessings of God and their owne knowledge: and lastly, for bringing others into danger as well as themselves, yet what is more, all this done under the *Gospell*; and often, as at this present, against one whose life, gredit, goods, and good name, the offender ought to cherish and maintaine to the uttermost: So I may take up that saying of *Isaac* to his two Sonnes, *My soule comenat into their secrets, neither bee ioyned with their assemblies*: nor have to doe with their practises, whose conclusions are so deeply dyed with the blood of Innocents.

*The second Confession of Alice Clarke this 10. day of
May, 1635. at the place of Execution, concer-
ning the poisoning of her husband,
Fortune Clarke.*

most horrid clamorous crimes. This is apparant, if you compare her first confession unto this, how different in truth, how improbable the one are unto the other; nay what she confessed on *Munday*, shee was so far off to proceede in a further revealing of her selfe, that what touched her home, concerning her husbands death, she would have denied, though formerly confessed by her most confidently true.

I was thereuppon inforced to hold her unto it, and to extract the truth, and trye her spirit, called two of the Keepers of the Gaile, to her unknowne, whom I appoynted to obserue and remember the speeches that passed betweene us, to verifie them unto her face, which attestation both of my selfe, and of them, shee would out-face, but could not.

Vppon *Wednesday* morning, on which shee was executed, there assembled unto Newgate multitudes of people to see her, and some conferred with her, but little good they did on her, for shee was of a stout angry disposition, suddainly iraged, if you began to touch her to the quicke of her husband poysoning. Being that morning of her death accompanied and also assisted by diuers of my worthy, grave, and learned brethren in the Ministry, before and at the time of her Execution, for which I doe most heartily thanke them, but that God whose worke it was, their reward for it with him is layd up in store. Like my selfe, they stood as men amazed, to perceiue that none of theirs, or any other serious perswasions could for a great while prevaile with her, ioyned in opinion with me, that shee was no fitting guest for the Table of the *Lord Iesus* thereupon, I made as though I would have excluded her thence, in denying the benefit of the holy Communion, of the

C

Body

Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, inferring the benefit of the unspeakable bleſſe, by the worthy receiving of it by Repentance and Faith, and the moſt woeful malediction to all impenitent and unworthy receivers. Whereupon, it pleaſed God, ſo to mollifie her heart, that teares from her eyes, and truth from her tongue proceeded, as may appeare by this her enſuing Confeſſion at the very Stake, where ſhe was executed, unto Mr. *Cordall*, Sheriffe of *London*, relating the ſame with as loud and audible a voice, as poſſible ſhe could, that many others beſides, there preſent, were alſo witneſſes of ſuch her enſuing Confeſſion.

Fiſt ſhe confeſſed that *Henry White*, who was arraigned as a party with her, conſenting unto her Huſbands death, did give unto her one *Aſcenſion* day in the afternoon, foure braſſe tokens, adviſing her therewith to goe and buy one penyworth of *Mercury*, and give it unto her Huſband, ſaying, if that her huſband were dead, ſhe ſhould live more quietly and contentedly with him, & after ſuch his death, that he the ſaid *White* would marry with her; whereupon ſhe went unto *Vx-bridge*, and that afternoone bought the *Mercury*.

Secondly, ſhee confeſſed that her Maſter got her with childe a yeare ſince, which was her overthrow, and mediated for the *Marriage*, betweene her and her Huſband, whom ſhee could not love, nor no way affect. By her Maſters perſwaſion, who ſent her up to *London* to be *Married*, and payed the coſts thereof, and further promiſed her maintenance during her life, if ſhe did condeſcend unto his deſiers, which were moſt unlawfull, diſhoneſt, and unchaſte, before and after her *Marrage*, with *Fortune Clarke* her Huſband.

Thirdly, ſhee confeſſed, that one of *Hillinden* inticed her

her, to run away from her Husband, with him beyond the Seas, and that she did lodge in that mans house, and lay with him a whole fortnight, and speaking unto him of her Husband, that shee would not forsake him, hee thereupon advised her to pop him up with white bread and milke, and to put some thing else into it, to choak or stufte up his throat.

Fourthly she confessed, for the *Mercury* which she bought, shee intended it unto her Husband, but having no convenient opportunity to dispose of it, she put it into her sleeve, which her Husband as she said tooke it out of her hand, and then being over charged with drink he immediatly swallowed it down, which she perceiving, was thereat so perplexed, that she uttered these words unto her Husband, that he had undone both him selfe and her.

And heere give me leave to note unto the World, what a deale of comfort she found, after shee had disburdned her loaded conscience by confession, beeing demaunded at the same instant of her death, yea, or nay; that after such her confession, shee was by it the better prepared unto death, with comfort, and willingness to suffer the same: Shee thus replied with harty thankfulness unto God, that shee had better resolutions unto death, then formerly she had, and by her countenance, which was very ruddy confirmed her inward new begotten chearfulness, and that with harty prayer, and sweet tone of voice, surrendered her soule into the hands of the Lord *Iesu*, who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, unto whom wee all stand and fall.

Heere is nothing contained in her confession, but that which is true, and what she uttered with her owne mouth; which I was a witness off.

H. Goodcole.

FINIS.